

# In Search of the Opinions of Contemporary Irish People towards Myths

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## Abstract

The stories of Irish myths have been passed down from the ancient times; most of the stories are set in pre-Christian Ireland. They were transmitted orally and preserved as the legacy of the Irish. The aim of the present writer's master thesis was to explore how Irish myths live among the hearts of contemporary Irish people and how the stories play the role of establishing Ireland's culture and identity. In order to pursue the transmission of myths in present day Ireland, the present writer examined three aspects, paganism, Christianity, and ideology so as to study the background of the tradition of Irish myths. In chapter four of this master thesis, the present writer introduced the data and information which was gathered from the survey conducted in Summer 2016. The aim of this master thesis was to examine how Irish myths from the ancient times live vividly among contemporary Irish people and how the stories play significant roles in establishing the culture and identity of Ireland. On this occasion, we would like to introduce the analysis of the survey.

In order to research how myths are living among Irish people and to examine how the stories play the role of establishing Ireland's culture and identity, the present writer conducted a survey in Summer 2016. The participants of the survey are contemporary Irish people living in Ireland and in oversea countries. Forty four participants cooperated in responding to the survey; they answered to questions expressively. Some of the questions dealt with the encounter of themselves or their children toward myths, while some questions focused on their opinions on Irish identity and myths. The data and opinions showed that the stories from the ancient times are part of being who they are; of being Irish. The interviewees also answered to how they regard themselves as being Irish, how they regard myths from the ancient times, and how they want the stories to be passed down to the next generations. It was evident that the participants enjoyed recalling their memories from their childhood; some of them expressed their unique opinions toward Irish myths. Even though all the participants are different in age, gender and educational backgrounds, most of them agreed that the stories are unique and that the stories are one of the valuable characteristics of Ireland. It would be possible to state that the stories are truly precious and significant for the Irish people. Through the research, we reached the conclusion

that Irish myths continue to live among Irish people today.